pilots are introduced to high workload/ high risk exercises in a progressive/regulated manner. Standards for each phase of training have been set and are being monitored.

(iii) Radio and Navigational aids are being given particular attention. Mandatory requirement of essential aids at airfields has been defined.

(iv) Appropriate instructions have been issued to ensure that medical factors like aircrew fatigue and hypoglycemia do not contribute to accidents.

(v) Instrument flying training and night flying training have been reviewed to meet operational requirements by day and night.

(vi) Setting and quantification of flying training standards in flying training establishments have been established.

(vii) A system of monitoring training standards and standards of Qualifying Flying Instructors has been introduced.

Technical defects

The major steps taken/being taken to reduce accidents by technical defects are:—

(i) Accidents due to design or manufacturing deficiencies are brought to the notice of the manufacturers for introducing modifications in aircraft. Pending such modifications, short term remedial measures in consultation with them, are expeditiously implemented.

(ii) Technical type Training Schools are being set up for various type of aircraft. Technicians will be given extended training on particular aircraft types.

(iii) Setting and quantification of standards in technical training establishments has been undertaken.

(iv) The Crew Chief System of aircraft servicing has been introduced on a trial basis.

(v) The training period for Branch commissioned Officers has been extended to include technical and management education.

(vi) Wing Maintenance has been restructured and percentage of untrained technicians reduced.

(vii) Experienced Supervisors have been placed In-charge of aircraft servicing repairs, and teams of technicians formed to service particular aircraft.

Bird strikes

Due to the increased urbanisation and industrialisation bird hazard to aircraft is on the increase. The steps taken to avoid bird strike accidents are:—

(i) Airfield Environment Management Committees have been set up under the Chairmanship of the concerned Collector/Distt. Magistrate to take necessary steps to keep the environment around airfields safe for flying.

(ii) Bird hazard combat teams have been established on an experimental basis at 5 selected airfields. These teams report bird activity to pilots and also kill/scare away the birds.

(iii) Use of bird watchers at airfields to keep pilots informed about bird activity in the airfield circuit areas.

(iv) Publicity drive by means of radio, TV, newspapers and posters is being undertaken to educate the general public about bird hazard to aircraft and necessity to maintain clean environment around airfields.

(v) The State Governments and local bodies are being regularly contacted to take steps for sanitation of areas outside the perimeter of Defence airfields.

Talks with Swiss Government

2200. SHRI VIRENDRA VERMA:
SHRI RAM NARESH KUSHAWAHA:
SHRI SHARAD YADAV:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the names, with ranks, of the officers recently sent by the Government to Berne stating the purpose of sending the official delegation;

(b) whether prior talks were held with the Swiss Government/President of the Swiss Banks Association making clear the purpose of sending the official delegation and whether they had agreed to the Government's proposal;

(c) if so, what is the outcome of the talks held;

(d) if the answer to part (b) above be in the negative what are the reasons for sending an official delegation without having prior talks with the Swiss Government/ President of the Swiss Banks Association; and

(e) what is the total expenditure incurred by the Government on the official delegation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B. K. GADHVI) (a) A team of experts, consisting of the following, was deputed to Switzerland to obtain first-hand information on the existing Swiss legal framework and procedures for obtaining information from Swiss Banks and to study the treaties/ agreement entered into by Switzerland with other countries for mutual assistance in investigation of criminal matters:

1. Dr. A. Ghosh, Deputy Governor, Reserve Bank of India, Bombay.

2. Shri V. G. Hegde, Principal Legal Adviser, Reserve Bank of India, Bombay.

3. Shri A. K. Aggarwal, Joint Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Banking Division, New Delhi.

4. Dr. P. S. Rao, Director (Legal & Treaties), Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi.

(b) to (d) The visit was to obtain first-hand information. In order to make the visit fruitful Swiss Governmental authorities were contacted in advance and appointments with various agencies were finalised before the team left India.

The team held discussions with representatives and officials of the Swiss Division of International Legal Assistance and Police Matters, Swiss National Bank and the Swiss Federal Banking Commission. Based on their discussions the team concluded that:

(i) Though Swiss authorities would not permit generalised enquiries or ordinarily divulge information about customers' accounts, Swiss banking secrecy could be lifted and information about customers' account obtained by securing appropriate court orders in Switzerland.

(ii) The Swiss Federal Act on International Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters (IMAC) provides for rendering of mutual assistance in criminal matters where acts with respect to which assistance is sought satisfy the test of dual criminality, and the State Seeking assistance guarantees reciprocity to Swiss authorities.

(iii) Mere evasion of tax or infringement of fiscal laws or violation of foreign exchange regulations would not be regarded as criminal offences by Swiss authorities.

(iv) Information obtained under IMAC cannot be used for any other purpose other than for which it is obtained.

(v) Assistance from Swiss authorities under IMAC could be obtained even without entering into a bilateral treaty/ agreement with Switzerland provided that the requirements of dual criminality and reciprocity are satisfied. Entering into a treaty or agreement would, however, enable (a) assistance even beyond the provisions of IMAC being extended and (b) placing an obligation on Swiss authorities to provide assistance according to the terms of treaty/ agreement.

In the light of the above conclusion, Government is initiating steps to enter into a treaty for mutual assistance in criminal matters with Swiss authorities, and pending conclusion of such a treaty/agreement entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with Swiss authorities for assistance in specific cases of Indians having accounts in Swiss Banks with funds obtained illegally.

(e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.